

### ***Rep. Schakowsky, Senator Durbin, Rep. Davis join doctors and consumers to discuss benefits of the Affordable Care Act***

**Chicago, IL** (March 23, 2012) -Today U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) and U.S. Representative Danny Davis (D-IL) joined doctors and individuals who have been helped by the new health care law at the Thompson Center to discuss the benefits of the Affordable Care Act on the 2nd anniversary of its passage into law .

As the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act celebrates its two-year anniversary, millions of Americans across the country have already begun to benefit from the health reform measure's significant efforts to improve the nation's health and make health care more accessible by making preventative care more affordable, increasing consumer protections, and helping to lower the cost of prescription drugs. However, the benefits and new protections included in the health reform law are at considerable risk. This week, House Republicans unveiled a budget resolution that would repeal the Affordable Care Act, gut Medicaid of \$1.7 trillion and turn Medicare into a voucher program – doubling out of pocket costs for seniors and the disabled. On March 26, the Supreme Court takes up the law and begins three days of oral arguments about several of the law's key provisions.

“My constituents are being helped by the new law today. In my district alone, 219,000 children and adults now have access to free preventive services, over 5,000 young adults have insurance because they are allowed to be covered on their parents' policies, and 7,500 seniors have received \$5.3 million in drug discounts,” **said Rep. Schakowsky**. “There are more benefits to come – health coverage for over 30 million Americans and soon women, seniors, or those with preexisting conditions will not be discriminated against with sky-high premiums. As we mark this two year anniversary of one of the single, most important legislation of a generation, my Democratic colleagues and I will continue our commitment to fighting against those who wish to take away important health care services that have already begun to make a significant difference the lives of so many Americans. This law is already working to save lives. Our message today is simple: we won an historic victory two years ago and we will not go back.”

More than 32 million seniors nationwide have taken advantage of free preventive services like colonoscopies and mammograms in Medicare, including 1.3 million Illinois seniors. Free wellness visits are now available through Medicare, a new health benefit. Moreover, 3.5 million seniors, including 144,000 in Illinois, have saved over \$2.1 billion on prescription drugs. Over two million young adults nationwide and 102,000 in Illinois who have been able to stay on their parents' insurance plan until age 26. Studies show that these are young people who otherwise might have no insurance at all. Now, 1,900 people in Illinois are enrolled in the state's Pre-Existing Conditions Insurance plan and no longer face barriers to critical care due to preexisting health conditions.

Those who already have private health insurance are receiving a better value for their money due to important consumer protections included in the health reform law. The law prohibits insurers from putting a lifetime cap on your insurance coverage or raise their rates by more than 10% per year without publicly disclosure. One of the major goals of the health reform law is to expand access to health care among the low-income and uninsured. The law made a huge investment in expanding the capacity of Community Health Centers, which provide primary care services to over 20 million low-income people in more than 8,000 locations across the country. In Illinois, health centers from Chicago to Springfield have received over \$87 million in new Federal funding.

□ **Senator Dick Durbin:** "Two years ago, many Illinoisans were living without the peace of mind that comes with quality healthcare coverage. Now, those who faced the most trying circumstances have seen their lives changed. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, 4.6 million Illinoisans no longer face a lifetime coverage cap, more than 140,000 seniors have saved \$96 million on prescriptions despite being in the donut hole, 1.3 million seniors have received free preventive health services and more than 100,000 young adults have been able to stay on their parents' insurance plans. Next week, the Supreme Court will begin hearing arguments on the Affordable Care Act. Many of America's landmark governing achievements – Social Security, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the federal minimum wage – were challenged in lower courts before they were ultimately upheld by the Supreme Court. I believe the same will happen with the Affordable Care Act. Millions of Americans are counting on it."

□ **Rep. Danny Davis:** "The Affordable Health Care Act was the greatest accomplishment in health care since the creation of Medicare. Representing one of the largest health care districts in the country; including many safety net hospitals and working poor, this law provides access for over 30 million Americans. I am extremely pleased with the expansion and role of Community Health Centers and the creation of a new home visiting program. As we continue implementation of the law, I will continue to work with the Obama Administration and the greater Chicago health community to ensure its success."

For more information on state by state data on health care reform visit: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/featured-content/aca\\_state-by-state\\_data\\_final.xlsx](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/featured-content/aca_state-by-state_data_final.xlsx)

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